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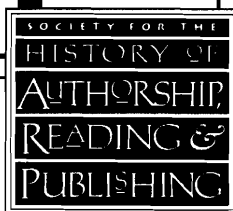
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SHARP NEWS



Volume 2, Number 4

Autumn 1993

The Reading Experience Database (RED)

Behind many of the questions posed by book history lies the problem of "Who read what, and how?" It is not a question that can be satisfactorily answered by setting a couple of Ph.D. students to study "reading experience" because, of course, the evidence is patchy, obscure and uncertain, and its discovery often a matter of serendipity. Commonly the most interesting evidence we have for reading experience tends to be a by-product of other research: one stumbles over an extensively glossed book, a diary entry reveals a day devoted to specific reading with comments attached, a public librarian reports a literary conversation with a borrower, and so on. On their own they are nothing more than picturesque anecdotes; listed together they seem too disparate to mean much. Quite often these interesting anecdotes get recorded on 6x4-inch cards and then forgotten.

There is a danger that this evidence might remain permanently fragmented and useless unless something is done to record and coordinate it. A couple of years ago, in the *Book Trade History Group Newsletter*, it was proposed that we should construct a database that could store this information: we could then spread the word far and wide that we were collecting reading experience data and invite individuals and institutions to contribute evidence. The results would be made available via both an on-line retrieval system and CD-ROM. This would not be a short-term project. However, within five to ten years the quantity of material collected, and the fact that it could be searched in a multitude of ways, would make the Reading Experience Database (RED) a major resource for the history of reading, the history of the book and, indeed, the history of culture and communications generally.

A small steering group was formed earlier this year to explore the feasibility and the academic value of such a project. The group, jointly chaired by Mike Crump (British Library) and Simon Eliot (Open University), also includes Elisabeth Leedham-Green (Cambridge University), James Raven (Cambridge University), Jonathan Rose (Drew University), and Alexis Weedon (Luton University). The group has decided that, whatever the difficulties, the value of such a database would be so great that at least a pilot project should be attempted. For the purposes of this pilot, chronological and geographical boundaries should be set. The project will collect evidence of reading experience between 1450-1914 within the British Isles and among those either born or normally resident in the British Isles between those dates. Within those parameters all languages and all nationalities will be covered. The fact that someone owned or borrowed a text would not in itself be regarded as adequate proof that he or she had read it (there are many reasons for possessing a book that have nothing to do with reading it). Evidence of the individual having at least scanned part of the text would be required.

Having established the limits, the next task was to devise a record format which would include as many useful fields as possible without becoming unmanageably difficult to fill in. Given that few pieces of evidence would be comprehensive enough to satisfy this full record, we also felt it necessary to define the minimum record that would be acceptable. The format, size, and content of both the full and minimum records are still being discussed within the group. What follows is simply an early draft. The group felt very strongly that it did not wish to finalise

define the minimum record that would be acceptable. The format, size, and content of both the full and minimum records are still being discussed within the group. What follows is simply an early draft. The group felt very strongly that it did not wish to finalise either the full or minimum records, or any of the fields within them, until the widest possible discussion between interested parties had taken place. There are two main reasons for inviting such a wide debate: one, we want to involve as many people as possible in the collection of evidence, and this will only work if people feel that they have been fully consulted; two, it is no intention of the current group to go much beyond the geographical limits set. Given that other groups may in the future wish to run similar projects for North America, Europe, Australasia, etc., we should get international agreement on a common format of records. Significant differences in the way that national projects record reading experience could have disastrous consequences for the development of the history of reading as an international subject. We intend to publish the following draft record formats as widely as possible, and welcome comment and feedback.

If you have any comments or suggestions, or if you wish to become a contributor to the project, please contact either Dr. Simon Eliot, Open University, 4 Portwall Lane, Bristol BS1 6ND, England, e-mail S.J.ELIOT@UK.AC.OPEN; or Mr. Mike Crump, Centre for the Book, The British Library, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG, England, e-mail BM.ESB%RLG.EARN@NSFNET-RELAY.

NOTE: In any given field words with square brackets indicate that these are the fixed range of classifying

terms that we propose to offer in that field. Fields followed by words within round parentheses indicate that these fields will allow any descriptive word to be used, and that those given are merely indicative.

Proposed Record Fields for Full Record

1.0 RECORD NUMBER

1.1 Number:

2.0 THE READER

2.1 Reader Name:

2.2 Reader Age:

2.3 Gender:

2.4 Socioeconomic Class:

[royal/aristocracy/gentry OR
professional/academic/merchant OR
clerk/tradesman/artisan OR
laborer (agricultural) OR
laborer (nonagricultural)]

2.5 Occupation: (e.g., prince, curate, servant, farmhand)

2.6 Place of Origin:

2.7 Country of Experience:

2.8 Date of Experience: (e.g., 4 February 1723, February 1723, 1723, 1720s, 1700-1750, 1700s)

2.9 Time of Experience: (e.g., 11:30 a.m., late morning, daytime)

2.10 Place of Experience: (e.g., drawing room, study, church, open air)

2.11 Type of Experience:

2.11.1 [silent OR aloud]

2.11.2 [solitary OR in company]

2.11.3 [listening OR reading]

2.11.4 [passive OR reactive]

2.11.5 [single event OR serial event]

2.12 Listeners: (e.g., family, friends, servants)

3.0 THE TEXT

3.1 Author Name:

3.2 Author Date:

3.3 Title:

3.4 Form of Text (MS): [roll, codex, pamphlet, letter, sheet]

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3.5.2 Date of Publication:**3.6 Language:** (e.g., English, Latin, French)**3.7 Genre:** [*Bible, sermon, other religious, fiction, poetry, drama, children's, history, biography, social science, politics, philosophy, education, textbooks/self-educators, arts/crafts, law, medicine, technology, science, reference/general works, classics*]**3.8 Part of text read:** (e.g., whole text, section, chapter, page, verse)**3.9 Provenance:** [*owned, borrowed (private library), borrowed (institution library), borrowed (circulating library), borrowed (public library), borrowed (other), found, stolen, read in situ*]**4.0 THE EVIDENCE****4.1 Textual Evidence:** [this field would contain the text that constituted the evidence]**4.2 Printed Source:****4.2.1 Author:****4.2.2 Place of Publication:****4.2.3 Date of Publication:**

OR

4.3 Manuscript Source:**4.3.1 Location****4.3.2 Call number:****4.3.3 Page/folio number:****4.4 Supplied by:****4.5 Date supplied:****5.0 GENERAL NOTES****5.1 Note Field:****Suggested Minimum Record****1.0 RECORD NUMBER****1.1 Number:****2.0 THE READER****2.4 Socioeconomic Class:** OR **2.5 Occupation:****2.8 Date of Experience:****3.0 THE TEXT****3.1 Author:** OR **3.3 Title:** OR **3.4 Type:**
OR **3.9 Genre:****4.0 THE EVIDENCE****4.1 Textual Proof:** [this field would contain the text that constituted the evidence]**4.2 Printed Source:****4.2.1 Author:****4.2.3 Date of Publication:**

OR

4.3 Manuscript Source:**4.3.1 Location:****4.3.2 Call number:****4.3.3 Page/folio number:****4.6 Supplied by:****4.7 Date supplied:****5.0 GENERAL NOTES****5.1 Note Field:**

—Simon Eliot

The History of the Book at the University of Alabama

The University of Alabama School of Library and Information Studies has taught the history of the book since the founding of the school in 1971. The emphasis initially was on book arts, including courses on printing and the history of printing. These courses developed into a separate two-year M.F.A. program in book arts. I took over the history of printing course in 1984 and later changed the name to the History of the Book. It is a required course for M.F.A. students, an elective for M.L.S. and Ph.D. students, and occasionally attracts students from other departments.

The course traces the history of the book from the ancient world through the nineteenth century in a one-semester survey. I teach separate courses on descriptive bibliography and modern book publishing and

only touch marginally on these areas here. This course emphasizes relationships between patterns of written communication and cultural and intellectual life. Aesthetics of the book and the development of letter forms are not ignored, but they are not the primary focus. I concentrate on general trends rather than individual printers and books; I also note parallels and contrasts between communications revolutions of the past and the electronic revolution of today.

Each student presents a half-hour case study of a book or genre of books that is intellectually or aesthetically significant in its own right. The case studies being presented this fall are listed below with the outlines for each class. Both my presentations and those of the students are illustrated by slides and examples from the library's department of special collections. Students also take an exam and write a term paper on a topic of their choice; the last two classes are devoted to student presentations of their term paper topics.

Two textbooks are assigned in their entirety. Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin's *The Coming of the Book* (Verso, 1984) is the classic survey in the *histoire du livre* tradition. Warren Chappell's *Short History of the Printed Word* (Godine, 1980) offers a good aesthetic and technological introduction to the subject and is nicely illustrated. The abridged syllabus below lists additional required readings for each class.

Syllabus

1. APPROACHES TO THE HISTORY OF THE BOOK; THE BOOK IN THE ANCIENT WORLD: ORALITY, LITERACY, AND AUTHORITY OF RECORDED COMMUNICATION. Approaches to the history of the book: antiquarian; bibliographical; *histoire du livre* and *Annales* school; aesthetic; technological. Oral basis of Greek culture. Writing materials: papyrus, parchment. Books in Greece and Rome. Transition from roll to codex.

Robert Darnton, "What Is the History of Books," in *Books and Society in History*, ed. Kenneth E. Carpenter (Bowker, 1983), pp. 3-26.

H. L. Pinner, *The World of Books in Classical Antiquity* (Sijthoff, 1948), pp. 9-49.

C. H. Roberts, "The Codex," *Proceedings of the*

British Academy 40 (1954): 169-204.

2. THE BOOK IN THE MIDDLE AGES: EUROPE AND THE MUSLIM WORLD. Authoritative texts and the medieval Arab book. The monastic tradition: Cassiodorus, St. Benedict, monastic scriptorium. Rise of the university;pecia system of book production. Case study: Books of Hours.

Christopher de Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* (Godine, 1986), pp. 76-135.

Johannes Pedersen, *The Arabic Book* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1984), pp. 20-36.

Michael T. Clanchy, "Looking Back from the Invention of Printing," in *Literacy in Historical Perspective*, ed. Daniel P. Resnick (Library of Congress, 1983), pp. 7-22.

3. INVENTION OF PRINTING: TECHNICALITIES. Paper and papermaking. Typefounding. Printing press. Ink. Case study: Biblia Pauperium.

Papermaking: Art and Craft (Library of Congress, 1968), pp. 31-49.

Joseph Moxon, *Mechanick Exercises on the Whole Art of Printing* (1683-84), ed. Herbert Davis and Harry Carter (2nd ed., Oxford Univ. Press, 1962): scan.

4. INVENTION AND SPREAD OF PRINTING. Chinese antecedents. Blockbooks. Johann Gutenberg, Johann Fust, Peter Schoeffer. Spread of printing. Historical conceptualization: Incunabula period (c. 1450-1500) or first century of printing? Case study: Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales* (William Caxton, 1478; 1483).

Eugene F. Rice, Jr., *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe, 1460-1559* (Norton, 1970), pp. 1-10.

Victor Scholderer, *Johann Gutenberg*, 2nd ed. (British Museum, 1970). 29 pp.

5. VISUAL APPEARANCE OF EARLY PRINTED BOOKS I. Manuscript books after 1455: Vespasiano da Bisticci, Johannes Trithemius. Appearance of early printed books: format; type fonts; colophon and title page; foliation and pagination; decoration and initials; rubrication, color printing; illustration; printers' marks. Case study: *Nuremberg Chronicle* (Koberger, 1493).

- Dale Roylance, *European Graphic Arts* (Princeton Univ. Library, 1986), pp. 1-41.
- Adrian Wilson, *The Making of the Nuremberg Chronicle* (Nico Israel, 1976), pp. 175-91.
6. VISUAL APPEARANCE OF EARLY PRINTED BOOKS II. Transition from gothic to roman type. Illustration techniques: woodcuts, engravings. Bindings. Case studies: *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (Aldus Manutius, 1499); Geoffroy Tory, *Champ Fleury* (1529).
- Joseph Blumenthal, *Art of the Printed Book, 1455-1955* (Godine, 1973): scan.
7. PRINTING AND SOCIETY IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE. Scholar printers: Aldus Manutius, Johann Froben, Robert Estienne. Christophe Plantin. Politics and religion; censorship. Literacy, reading, and book distribution. Printing and the development of vernacular languages. Case study: Aldus's octavo classics (1501-).
- Roger Chartier, "The Practical Impact of Writing," in *A History of Private Life*, vol. 3 (Harvard Univ. Press, 1989), pp. 111-59.
8. CONSEQUENCES OF PRINTING. Typographic fixity. Charting the geographic world: map printing. Medical and botanical illustration. Printing and the rise of modern science. Case study: Vesalius, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (1543).
- Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983), pp. 3-106.
9. SEVENTEENTH CENTURY; PRINTING IN THE AMERICAS. Efflorescence of literature and learning: King James Bible, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Molière. Learned societies; scientific journals; university presses and scholarly publishing. Printing in the Americas: Mexico, North American colonies. Types of colonial printing. Center-periphery tensions and the colonial printers. Case studies: Juan Pablos (Mexico, c. 1539-60); Bay Psalm Book (1640).
- David D. Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment* (Knopf, 1989), pp. 21-70.
10. EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DEVELOPMENTS; POPULAR LITERATURE. Beginnings of statutory copyright. Subscription publishing. Professionalization of authorship. Developments in type design. Popular literature: broadside ballads, chapbooks, street literature. Case studies: Virgil (Baskerville, 1757); Guy of Warwick.
- Margaret Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories* (Univ. of Georgia Press, 1982), pp. 1-18, 111-28.
- Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1987), pp. 3-12, 260-64.
- Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor* (Dover reprint, 1968), vol. 1, pp. 213-26.
11. NINETEENTH CENTURY: TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS. Demographic background: population, education, literacy. Mechanization of bookmaking: papermaking, printing presses, composition, stereotype and electrotypes plates, illustration, bookbinding. Reaction to mechanization: private press movement. Case studies: William Pickering's Aldine Poets (1830-53); Kelmscott Chaucer (William Morris, 1896).
- Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 81-96.
12. NINETEENTH CENTURY: PUBLICATION PATTERNS. Publishing and book distribution in early nineteenth-century America: Mathew Carey, Mason Locke Weems. Separation of the publishing function. Publication patterns: three-decker novel, publication in parts, yellowbacks, cheap series. Paperbacks of 1870s and 1880s. International copyright.
- William Charvat, *Literary Publishing in America, 1790-1850* (Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1959), pp. 17-37.
- Kathleen Tillotson, *Novels of the Eighteen-Forties*, corrected ed. (Oxford Univ. Press, 1954), pp. 21-47.

—Gordon B. Neavill

SHARP 1994 Washington Conference: Final Call for Papers

SHARP's second annual conference will meet 14-16 July 1994 at the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress. We welcome papers dealing with any aspect of book history. Proposals (two pages maximum) are due 10 December 1993 and should be mailed to John Y. Cole, Director, The Center for the Book, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540.

Any SHARP member who is not submitting a proposal can serve on the Program Committee, which will meet in Washington on 8 January 1994 to assess the abstracts. If you want to join the Program Committee, contact Dr. Cole by 10 December.

New Book Studies Journal Launched

New England Book and Text Studies is a new report and commentary on the use of primary materials in theory, research, and teaching. Emphasizing the interrelations of historical and literary analyses of books, texts, and their visual forms, and with occasional forays into complementary disciplines such as music, philosophy, and architecture, *NEBTS* also draws on programs in communications and library science, and underscores library-university relations in the classroom use of primary materials.

Each issue will report on book- and text-based courses at colleges and universities, the use of primary materials in those courses, current research on primary materials, specialized library materials and programs that directly support the curriculum, the critical significance of selected period books and manuscripts, and the use of electronic text forms to acquaint students with primary materials. *NEBTS* will also discuss the history and theory of texts; the application of Robert Darnton's idea of book history; the uses of scholarly editions; author-trade relations; art-literature relations within and outside of the book; the book as material culture; manuscript forms and typography; recent work in journals and collections with teaching applications; the representation of books and their history in

scholarly works; and the classroom use of new and older studies in bibliography, textual criticism, and cultural history.

Appearing three times a year beginning Winter 1994, *NEBTS* has an immediate focus on New England colleges and universities, but contributions are welcomed from scholars everywhere. Subscriptions are \$15 in the United States, £13 in Britain, \$20 elsewhere. *NEBTS* will be distributed without charge for one year to New England departments of English, history, and art history in colleges and universities with at least four-year programs. Address all orders and correspondence to the editor, C. D. Phelps, *NEBTS*, PO Box 1071, Cambridge, MA 02139.

Fellowships

The Houghton Library at Harvard University offers several fellowships of interest to book historians. The newest is the Houghton Mifflin Fellowship in Publishing History: the first winner (in 1992) was SHARP member Ruth Bottigheimer. The library also awards the Rodney G. Dennis Fellowship for the Study of Manuscripts, the Eleanor M. Garvey Fellowship in Printing and the Graphic Arts, and the Stanley J. Kahrl Fellowship in Literary Manuscripts. Each fellow is expected to be in residence at Harvard for at least one month during the period from July 1994 through June 1995; the stipend for each fellowship is \$1500. Fellows occasionally present informal talks on their work during the tenure of the fellowship. Applicants should write to Richard Wendorf, Librarian of the Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 02138. Applications are due 15 January 1994 and should include (1) a statement of not more than three pages describing your research project and the importance of the Library's collections to your work; (2) a current curriculum vitae; and (3) two letters of recommendation from scholars familiar with your work.

Calls for Papers

The Bibliographical Society of Canada/La Société Bibliographique du Canada is seeking proposals for papers to be delivered at its 1994 annual conference, which will be held in conjunction with the Learned Societies meetings at the University of Calgary, 7-8 June 1994. The conference theme is "Bibliography and Western Canada." Areas of special interest include the book, literacy, and publishing in Western Canada; as well as libraries and bibliographical research in or about Western Canada. Proposals should be submitted by 1 January 1994 to the BSC, PO Box 575, Postal Station P, Toronto, ON, M5S 2T1, Canada.

Recent Publications

General

Nicolas Barker, ed., *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society* (London: British Library, 1993).

Karen Cherewatuk and Ulrike Wiethaus, eds., *Dear Sister: Medieval Women and the Epistolary Genre* (Philadelphia: Univ. of

Pennsylvania Press, 1993).

Charles A. D'Aniello, ed., *Teaching Bibliographic Skills in History: A Sourcebook for Historians and Librarians* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993).

Henri-Jean Martin, *The History and Power of Writing* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1993).

A. J. Minnis, ed., *Late-Medieval Religious Texts and Their Transmission* (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 1993).

Klaus Musmann, *Technological Innovations in Libraries, 1860-1960* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993).

Armando Petrucci, *Public Lettering: Script, Power, and Culture*, trans. Linda Lappin (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1993).

Nigel Smith, ed., *Literature and Censorship* (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 1993).

Britain

David Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993).

Thomas N. Corns, *Uncloistered Virtue: English Political Literature, 1640-1660* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992).

Donald D. Eddy, *Sale Catalogues of the Libraries of Samuel Johnson, Hester Lynch Thrale (Mrs. Piozzi) and James Boswell* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll, 1993).

R. J. Fehrenbach and E. S. Leedham-Green, eds., *Private Libraries in Renaissance England*, vol. 2 (Marlborough: Adam Matthew, 1993).

Kate Flint, *The Woman Reader 1837-1914* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993).

Robert Harris, *A Patriot Press: National Politics and the London Press in the 1740s* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993).

Margaret Laing, *Catalogue of Sources for A Linguistic Atlas of Early Medieval English* (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 1993).

Leila Luedeking and Michael Edmonds, *Leonard Woolf: A*

Begin or renew your membership in SHARP, and you will receive *SHARP News* as well as the SHARP Membership Directory when it is published next summer. Send a check in American or British currency, made out to SHARP, to Linda Connors, Drew University Library, Madison, NJ 07940, USA.

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Institution:

Research Interests:

Check if you prefer not to be included in the SHARP Directory and SHARP mailing lists: ☐

Bibliography (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll, 1992).

Carol M. Meale, *Women and Literature in Britain, 1150-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993).

R. A. B. Mynors and R. M. Thomson, comps., *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Hereford Cathedral Library* (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 1993).

Joad Raymond, ed., *Making the News: An Analysis of the Newsbooks of Revolutionary England, 1641-1660* (Aldestrop: Windrush Press, 1993).

Michael Scrivener, ed., *Poetry and Reform: Periodical Verse from the English Democratic Press* (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1992).

C. W. Topp, *Victorian Yellowbacks and Paperbacks 1849-1905, vol. 1: George Routledge* (Denver: Hermitage Antiquarian Bookshop, 1993).

United States

Alfred Emile Comebise, *Ranks and Columns: Armed Forces Newspapers in American Wars* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993).

Thomas Gustafson, *Representative Words: Politics, Literature, and the American Language, 1776-1865* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993).

John Heidenry, *Theirs Was the Kingdom: Lila and DeWitt Wallace and the Story of the Reader's Digest* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1993).

Margaret C. Jones, *Heretics and Hellraisers: Women Contributors to The Masses, 1911-1917* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1993).

Dodie Kazanjian and Calvin Tomkins, *Alex: The Life of Alexander Liberman* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993).

Michael Lund, *America's Continuing Story: An Introduction to Serial Fiction, 1850-1900* (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1993).

Michael Oriard, *Reading Football: How the Popular Press Created an American Spectacle* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1993).

Jane Aikin Rosenberg, *The Nation's Great Library: Herbert Putnam and the Library of Congress, 1899-1939* (Champaign: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1993).

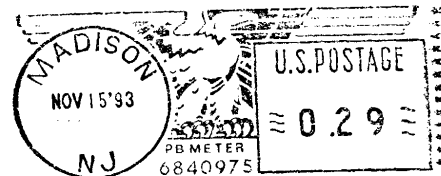
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How We Are Doing

SHARP lost one of its best friends when Jeremiah Kaplan died last 10 August. Kaplan founded The Free Press in 1947, and went on to become chairman of Macmillan and president of Simon and Schuster. As chairman of the Association of American Publishers, he encouraged the publishing industry to recover its own history. Kaplan concluded an honorable career of public service as a director of SHARP, building links between scholars and publishing professionals.

Our happier news is that Linda Connors of the Drew University Library has taken on the job of Membership Secretary for SHARP. She will keep our mailing list up-to-date, and from now on all membership forms and renewals will go to her. And Philip Metzger of the Lehigh University Library, designer of printed materials for SHARP, now formally assumes the office of Publicity Director. His next project is a membership brochure, which we hope to have ready for the AHA and MLA conventions. If you would like a batch to distribute at a conference or library, let us know how many to send you.

The Membership Secretary and Publicity Director will join the Executive Board under the new SHARP constitution. We hope to mail that constitution to you, along with a postal ballot, before the end of the year.



James R. Kelly
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